

WASHINGTON WHISPERS

Does Ronald Reagan resent being rebuked to his face by "Tip" O'Neill? Not much. Intimates believe that every time the House Speaker dumps on the President, as he did recently about the unemployment problem, Reagan's popularity goes up another notch and the Democrats' chances in this year's elections go down.

an has ordered a total overhaul of U.S. intelligence network assigned to track of terrorist groups abroad. pean allies have been needling ington for trailing them in ability cate radicals and finding out what re up to.

ds of New York's Governor Mario Cuomo hope Henry Kissinger follows through on his hints of running against Cuomo this year. Democratic leaders figure the governor not only would win easily but also would reap a lot more publicity for a possible stab at the White House in 1988 than he would by facing a less renowned Republican than the former Secretary of State.

Bob Dole's friends are circulating a survey showing he was the President's strongest backer in the Senate last year, voting with the White House 92 percent of the time. Purpose: To disprove charges that the Republican majority leader is more intent on running for President himself in 1988 than in backing the administration.

Look for Reagan to switch to foreign affairs once he's through introducing his budget. His top three priorities from Congress: Weapons for Mideast ally Jordan, \$100 million for the *contra* rebels in Nicaragua, \$10 million to \$15 million for the anti-Marxist guerrillas in Angola.

Donald Regan, White House chief of staff, is fed up with Communications Director Patrick Buchanan. Regan aides complain that they have to watch constantly for Buchanan or his speech writers to slip mention of abortion, aiding the *contra* rebels or some other pet conservative cause into the President's speeches—whether they pertain to the topic at hand or not.

Will the U.S. be a final refuge for Philippine strong man Marcos? State

Why Cuomo hopes Kissinger runs

A U.S. refuge for Philippines' Marcos?

Tip for George Bush: "Cool it"

Department officials already have laid plans to admit the ailing Marcos for health reasons—like the late deposed Shah of Iran—if the island nation turns against him.

"Cool it," is the advice George Bush is getting from some of his old cronies. They warn the Vice President that he's going too far too fast to please the Republican conservative faction and might



Vice President Bush

blow his moderate support for the 1988 GOP nomination for President if he doesn't ease up.

James Miller, the new budget director, is sending peace signals to Caspar Weinberger. Miller wants the Defense Secretary to know that, unlike predecessor David Stockman, he'll back Weinberger's drive to increase military spending despite the need to cut the budget deficit.

Behind quick U.S. rejection of truce signals from Muammar Qadhafi: Reagan intends to keep Libya's mercurial leader off balance by ordering two Sixth Fleet battle groups to remain on station in the central Mediterranean indefinitely as a blunt reminder of American power.

George Shultz insists he's not interested in heading the World Bank as some say, but the Secretary of State is suggesting candidates for the post and is determined to be involved in the President's final selection.

Mexico's President de la Madrid is considering making a dramatic appeal to the U.S. for financial aid. Plummeting oil prices are pushing Mexico, despite help from the World Bank, to openly admit it can't keep up on repaying its debts.

The real reason Reagan moved his state-of-the-union address to Congress ahead an hour: White House officials discovered two television networks would be in the middle of highly publicized miniseries dramas for the appointed time and feared upsetting millions of viewers by delaying the shows.

The shuttle tragedy handed harried congressional budget cutters another hot potato. If they try to impose the same spending reductions on space flights as on other agencies, many lawmakers fear they'll be accused of retreating from the whole program and dishonoring the seven dead crew members of Challenger.

Three reasons why the U.S. is slow to reply to the latest arms-control offer by Soviet boss Gorbachev: 1. Washington must consult with its allies before taking any steps. 2. Kremlin insistence on canceling Reagan's Star Wars project is a major obstacle. 3. Translation problems with the proposal are making Soviet intentions muddier.

How do you dance the Budget Chicken? That's what insiders on Capitol Hill are calling maneuvers expected in the coming months over government spending. Steps involved: The President proposes his budget. Congress rejects it. Everybody runs around in circles until next fall, when they finally come up with a three-way split on domestic spending.

ILLEGIB

CAPITAL COMMENT

Not ready for prime time

Edwin M. Yoder on televising the Senate

One September day in 1984, the Senate found itself paralyzed by debate, unable to decide whether to admit television cameras to the floor. The issue, tabled then, is scheduled for the week of February 3. Many members think the Senate's deliberative nature will be at stake.

The House made its peace with TV nearly a decade ago. While cameras grind, House members now speak in the clipped phrases called "sound bites," with the hope of getting a few minutes' exposure on the evening news. But the House didn't exactly bare its breast to video. Like an unpredictable plow mule, the camera is blinkered—bidden to pan benches that often are empty.

In fact, when House Speaker "Tip" O'Neill recently discovered that some young Republican members were staging after-hours Democrat bashing on the C-SPAN public-affairs network, he contrived to suspend the stationary-camera rule.

The camera panned the chamber, revealing to unsuspecting viewers that the GOP orators were conducting roasts without any roastees.

The episode is symptomatic, for in both houses harmless illusion matters. Former Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker of Tennessee, a strong advocate of TV coverage before he quit to campaign for President, argues that television is already a *fait accompli*. Senators may be denied TV exposure on the floor, but they find plenty of it in the corridors during important debates.

The essential question, say Baker and other proponents, is publicity: The danger of institutional eclipse. The Senate came to terms with television when cameras were admitted to committee hearings years ago. From the Kefauver crime probes, to Army-McCarthy in 1954, to Watergate, televised committee spectacles have often dominated the news. That's the reality, so why balk at letting cameras cross the last remaining boundary?

Such questions do have answers,

and foes of televised floor debate are happy to supply them.

In committee hearings, they argue, the Senate wears its fact finder's hat. In floor proceedings, by contrast, senators act and make decisions. It's a cherished belief that in the Senate's intimate setting a stirring floor speech can still change minds.

What, foes ask, might become of this deliberative tradition if senators are tempted to orate to unseen millions via television, not persuade colleagues seated a few feet away? If no speaker can serve two masters, what is to prevent self-conscious playacting before the camera?

Opponents also note that the two chambers differ in size, layout and function. What is good for one is not necessarily good for the other. The House is too large a body to accommodate leisurely discussion: Its proceedings are more impersonal. Members speak briefly on a rigid schedule set in advance.

Senators speak, usually at leisure, from their seats, so the cameras could not be permanently focused on one or two spots. Under the hallowed custom of "unlimited debate," a senator may in theory speak at any length until two thirds of his colleagues vote to end debate. Television might generate pressure to modify or even abolish unlimited debate, for it's unrealistic to think other senators would sit still while one or two filibusters dominated a debate seen by millions.

For the Senate, the scheduled debate will be a debate over publicity. But it will concern institutional character, too. Television has a way of casting the cool valet's eye on its masters. A televised Senate might quickly become a familiar spectacle for millions. No one would mind that—unless it were the familiarity that breeds contempt.

Edwin M. Yoder is a Washington-based syndicated columnist



military outlays and a consumption-based tax increase.

Add the name of Colorado Senator William Armstrong to the growing list of Republican lawmakers with presidential ambitions. Armstrong, a solid conservative, is backed by Senator Gordon Humphrey of New Hampshire, whose state is the probable site of the first party primary in 1988.

Briefly considered by White House aides and then discarded in the turmoil following explosion of the shuttle: Sending Nancy Reagan to Concord, N.H., to offer the First Family's condolences to the hometown of teacher-astronaut Christa McAuliffe.

William Casey is on speaking terms with Congress again. The crusty director of the Central Intelligence Agency, without apologizing for accusing lawmakers of leaking classified data, has quietly reopened lines of communication with Capitol Hill and is again listening to advice from key members.

Democrats think they've spotted a new "sleeper" candidate in this year's battle for control of the Senate. He's Representative James Jones, who's given a fighting chance to upset Republican Senator Don Nickles in Oklahoma.

Gramm-Rudman has returned to roost with a vengeance on Capitol Hill. Members of Congress who voted for the budget-cutting measure are aghast to find it'll force them to cut an average \$185,000 a year each in funds for staff and office expenses and at least \$50 million from mailing costs.

Kremlin boss Gorbachev is contemplating a propaganda coup when February's Communist Party Congress opens in Moscow. He's thinking of opening the normally closed meeting of Soviet leaders to live coverage by TV and reporters.

It's never too early to plan your summer vacation. House members—facing rough fights on the budget, taxes, trade and other issues—made it one of their first pieces of business on return from the holidays to extend their July 4 vacation by a week.